GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2930
ANSWERED ON:15.03.2016
Food Security
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Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the ranking accorded to the country in the Global Hunger Index Report, 2015 prepared by the International Food Policy Research Institute and the steps taken by the Government to improve the position in the Index;
(b) whether a significant proportion of the population continue to suffer from lack of food according to the said report;
(c) if so, the details thereof and the measures taken to look in all the aspects of the problem;
(d) whether hunger/starvation deaths have been reported from various States and the Supreme Court has also made a critical remark in this regard, if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto; and
(e) the corrective steps taken to check hunger/starvation in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN)
(a) to (c): As per information available in the public domain, Global Hunger Index report 2015 brought out by the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) in its latest publication released in October, 2015, India's rank has been calculated as 80.
The report provides the following undernourishment and malnutrition related statistics on India
- 15.2% of the population are undernourished and suffer from lack of food.
- 38.8% of children under the age of five are stunted.
- 15.0 % of children under 5 years are wasted and
- Under five mortality rate is quoted as 5.3%.
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The Government of India has accorded high priority to the issue of hunger and malnutrition in the country and is implementing several schemes/programmes through State Governments/UT Administrations to improve food security situation in the country. These include Targeted Public Distribution System(TPDS), Wheat Based Nutrition Programme (WBNP) for providing Supplementary Nutrition, Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme for pre-school children and pregnant and lactating mothers through the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Mid-Day-Meal Scheme (MDM) for primary and upper primary children through Ministry of Human Resource Development, Annapurna Scheme for the senior citizens, Nutritional Programme for Adolescent Girls, Emergency Feeding Programme, etc.
National Food Security Act, 2013 (NFSA) provides for coverage of upto 75% of the rural population and upto 50% of the urban population for receiving foodgrains (rice, wheat & coarsegrains) at highly subzided rates. Thus, 81.35 crore persons which constitute about two-thirds of the population is covered under NFSA. This coverage has been delinked from poverty estimates. The eligible families under NFSA comprise of priority households and Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) families. Priority households are entitled to receive 5 Kg of foodgrains per person per month at highly subsidized price of Rs.3, 2 & 1 per Kg. for rice, wheat & coarsegrains respectively. The existing AAY households, which constitute the poorest of the poor, will continue to receive 35 Kg. of foodgrains per household per month. The Act also provides that in case annual allocation of foodgrains to any State under the Act is less than the average annual offtake of foodgrains for the last three years under normal TPDS, the same shall be protected. Implementation of the Act has started in 30 States/Union Territories (UTs), covering about 68 crore persons. Foodgrains allocation under erstwhile TPDS is being continued in remaining States/UTs.
Government of India has provisionally allocated 289.46 lakh tonnes under NFSA and 207.31 lakh tonnes of foodgrains under erstwhile TPDS during current year. Further, an additional 50.01 lakh tonnes of foodgrains have also been allocated during the current year for Below Poverty Line (BPL) and Above Poverty Line (APL) families to the States/UTs where NFSA has not been implemented. In addition, during the current year, 11.70 lakh tonnes of foodgrains have been allocated to the States for festival, calamities and other additional requirements. The Government has also allocated 52.18 lakh tonnes of foodgrains under Other Welfare Schemes such as Mid Day Meal Scheme, Annapurna Scheme, SC/ST/OBC Hostel Scheme, Welfare Institutions Scheme, SABLA Scheme and Wheat Based Nutrition Programme Scheme.
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The Act also has a special focus on nutritional support to women and children. Pregnant women and lactating mothers are entitled to meals as per nutritional norms as well as to receive maternity benefit of not less than Rs.6,000. Children upto 14 years of age are entitled to meals as per the prescribed nutritional standards. Higher nutritional standards have been fixed for malnourished children upto 6 years of age. In case of non-supply of entitled foodgrains or meals, the beneficiaries will receive food security allowance.
(d) & (e): No State Government/Union Territory Administration has reported any incident of death due to starvation/hunger. Hon'ble Supreme Court vide its order dated 14.05.2011 in the Writ Petition (Civil) No. 196 of 2001 had made observations about the problem of malnutrition and starvation in the country and directed to reserve additional 50 lakh tonnes of foodgrains for distribution to the 150 poorest districts or the extremely poor and vulnerable sections of our society. The Hon'ble Court had also stated that its orders were made to ensure that no starvation deaths may take place and people can be saved from malnutrition as far possible. Pursuant to the directions of the Hon'ble Court and recommendations of the Committee headed by Justice (Retired) D.P. Wadhwa, Government of

India allocated 23.69 lakh tonnes and 21.21 lakh tonnes of foodgrains to the States during 2011-12 and 2012-13 respectively for distribution amongst the additional Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and Below Poverty Line (BPL) families. In addition Govt. of India also allocated 50 lakh tonnes of foodgrains each during 2012-13 and 2013-14 respectively and 29.86 lakh tonnes during 2014-15 for additional BPL families in the States/UTs.

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